# Regarding the Prophet, salAllaahu 'alaihi wa salaam's Guidance in Fasting

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**Regarding the Prophet's,(Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã), Guidance in Fasting**

Since the intention behind fasting is to restrain o-neself from desires in order to prepare o-neself for seeking that wherein lies the utmost happiness and the acceptance of that which purifies the heart and reduces the sharpness of hunger and thirst and reminds o-ne of the hunger felt by the needy and narrows the courses of Shaytaan by narrowing the courses of food and drink.It is the bridle of al-Muttaqun [the righteous and God fearing] the shield of the warriors and the (spiritual) excercise of the righteous who are near to Allaah. And out of all acts, it is for the Lord of the Worlds, for the fasting person does not do anything ; he o-nly refrains from following his desire- and that is abandoning the things which he loves for love of Allaah and it is a secret between the slave and his Lord, for the slaves might observe o-ne abstaining from the things which clearly break the fast, but as for him abstaining from them for the sake of the o-ne Whom he worships, that is something that mankind cannot see and that is the reality of fasting.Fasting has an amazing effect o-n protecting the limbs (from sin) and the internal urges from attraction to corrupting elements and in removing harmful substances from the body which prevent it from attaining good health. It is o-ne of the greatest forces in helping o-ne ot achieve Taqwaa [Fear of Allaah, piety,righteousness] as Allaah, the Most High said:

" O you who believe! Observe As-Saum (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqun (the pious)"

And the Prophet, (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) ordered those whose desire for marriage was intense but who are unable to do so, to fast and he declared it to be a means of controlling those desires [narrated by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, at-Tirmidhee, Aboo Dawood and an-Nasaai]

The guidance of the Prophet, (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) was the most perfect of guidance and the greatest in achieving the goal of fasting and the easiest for human beings to follow. And since weaning people away from their desires and the things to which they are accustomed is o-ne of the most difficult things, the injunction to fast was delayed until after the Hijraah and at first its obligation was in the form of a choice between fasting and feeding a needy person for each day, then fasting was made compulsary and feeding a needy person was granted for the old man and the woman, if they are unable to bear fasting. And it was permitted for the sick person and the traveller to break their fast and to make up for it; likewise it was permitted for the pregnant woman and the breast feeding woman, if they fear for their health. And if they fear for the safety of their children, then in addition to making up for the fast, they must feed a needy person for each day [narrated by compilers of

Sunan and Ahmad and others]. This is because their breaking the fast is not due to fear of illness but it is done in spite of the woman being in good health and so she must feed a needy person, as was the case with a person who broke his fast in the early days of Islaam.

It was part of his guidance, salAllaahu 'alaihi wa salaam in the month of Ramadhaan to perform many acts of worship of various types and Jibreel ('alayhis salaam) used to go over the Qu'raan with him in the month of Ramadhaan. He also used to perform many acts of charity and benevelonce, recite the Qu'raan and pray, mention Allaah's name (Dhikhr) and perform I'tikaaf (will elaborate o-n this in a future installment inshaaAllaah). He used to favour Ramadhaan with more acts of worship than other times. So that he would sometimes fast continuosly for two days or more without breaking the fast (al-Wisal), in order to devote the hours of the day and night to worship. But he forbade his companions, radiallahu 'anhum from practicing al-Wisal. They said to him "But you practice al-Wisal". He said: " I am not as you". I stay with my Lord and He sustains me" [narrated in Malik's al-Muwwatta]. He prohibited it out of compassion for his people and he permitted it up to predawn.

It was a part of his (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) guidance that he would not begin fasting the month of Ramdhaan until he had sighted the new moon or someone testified that he had seen it. If he did not sight it and no o-ne testified to having sighted it, he would complete thirty days of Sha'baan. Then o-n the night of the thirtieth, if he had not sighted the new moon due to clouds, he would complete thirty days of Sha'baan and he would not fast o-n a day when it was cloudy, nor did he order his Companions radiallahu 'anhum to do so. Instead he ordered them to complete thirty days of Sha'baan and this does not contradict his words: " If it is hidden from you, then calculate (when it should appear)" [ narrated by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Arabic word "Qadr" (used in the 'Araabee translation of the hadeeth) means the estimated account and what is intended by its completion.It was a part of his
(**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) guidance to end the fast of Ramadhaan based upon the testimony of two people [narrated by an-Nasaai and Ahmad]. And if two witnesses testified that they had seen it after the time for 'Eed had gone, he would break his fast and order his Companions radiallaahu 'anhum to break their fast and he offered the 'Eed prayer the next day at its time (the previous day) [narrated by Aboo Dawood and Ahmad]. He used to hasten to break his (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) fast and he encouraged his Companions radiallahu 'anhum to do likewise and he used to partake in Suhuur (pre-dawn meal) and he encouraged them to do the same and he used to delay it and he would urge them to delay it. He encouraged them to break the fast with dates, or water if none were available [narrated by at-Tirmidhee, Aboo Dawood, Ahmad and Ibn Khuzaymah]. And he forbade the fasting person from sexual relations, raising the voice (in anger), reviling people and answering the insults of o-ne who does so; and he ordered the o-ne who is abused to respond by saying: " I am fasting" [narrated by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, the compilers of the Sunan, Ahmad, Maalik and ad-Daraaqutni].

He traveled during Ramadhaan and he fasted and broke his fast and he left it to his Companions radiallahu 'anhum to decide which they preferred. He would order them to break their fast if they were near to an enemy, but it was not a part of his guidance to define the distance which a fasting person should travel. When the companions radiallaahu 'anhum started out o-n a journey, they would break their fast without a consideration as to whether or not they had left behind their houses; and they informed us that that was the Sunnah of the Prophet (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) [narrated by at-Tirmidhee, ad-Daaraqutni and al-Bayhaqi].

Fajr time would come upon him (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) while he was in a state of Janaabah due to having sexual intercourse with his wife and he salAllaahu 'alaihi wa salaam would perform Ghusl after Fajr and then fast [narrated by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and Maalik]. He used to kiss some of his wives when he was fasting [narrated by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and Maalik] and he compared the kissing of a fasting person to rinsing the mouth during ablution [narrated by Aboo Dawood and declared authentic by Ibn Khuzaymah, Ibn Hibban, Al-Haakim and confirmed by adh-Dhaahabi].

And it had not been authentically reported from his that he discriminated between an elderly man and a young man (in this matter).It was a part of his (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) guidance to waive the ruling o-n o-ne who ate and drank forgetfully and he said that it was Allaah who fed him and gave him drink [narrated al-Bukhaaree and at-Tirmidhee]. The things which have been authentically reported from him that nullify fasting are: Eating and drinking (intentionally), cupping [narrated by Aboo Dawood, Ibn Maajah, al-Haakim, Ash-Shafi'ee, at-Tahawi and al-Bayhaqi and declared authentic by Ibn Hibaan and al-Haakim] and vomiting (if the vomiting is self induced). The Qu'raan also proves that sexual intercourse invalidates fasting. Nothing authentic has been reported from him (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) regarding the use of kohl.It has been authentically reported from him (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) that he used a Miswaak while he was fasting. Imaam Ahmad reported that he used to pour water o-n his head which he was fasting and he used to rinse his mouth (Madmadaah) and sniff water into his nose (Instinshaaq) while he was fasting, but he forbade the fasting person from sniffing the water up so high in the nose [ narrated by Aboo Dawood, Ibn Maajah, an-Naasai, Ahmad and Shafi'ee]. It is not correct that he performed cupping while he was fasting [ o-n the contrary; it was narrated by al-Bukhaaree o-n the authority of Ibn 'Abbas radiallahu 'anhu that he said: " The Prophet (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) performed cupping while he was fasting]. Ahmad said: " It has been narrated from him what he said regarding antimony: "The fasting person should avoid it" but this is not correct; Ibn Ma'een said "This hadeeth is munkaar (too many mistakes in the chain of narrations).

He would fast so much that it would be said: "He will not break his fast" and he would break his fast until it would be said: "He will not fast"[al-Bukhaaree]. He did not fast a whole month except for the month of Ramadhaan and he did not fast more in any month more than he did in the month of Sha'baan [al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and Maalik].

And he did not let any month pass without fasting in it. He used to observe fasting o-n Mondays and Thursdays [at-Tirmidhee, an-Nasaa'ee and Ibn Maajah o-n the authority of 'Aaishaah radiallahu 'anha].Ibn 'Abbas radiallaahu 'anhu said: "The Messenger of Allaah did not leave fasting o-n the days of the full moon- neither when he was at home, nor when he was travelling". This was mentioned by an-Nasaa'ee. And he used to encourage his Companions radiallahu 'anhum to do likewise[an-Nasaa'ee and Ahmad].As for fasting the 10th day of Dhul Hijjaah, scholars disagree o-n it ['Aaishaah radiallahu 'anha reported: "I never saw the Messenger of Allaah salAllaahu 'alaihi wa salaam fasting ten days in Dhul Hijjah"]. But as for fasting six days in Shawwal, it has been authentically reported from him (**Õáì Çáää Úáíå æÓáã**) that he said:"Fasting it along with Ramadhaan is equivalent (in reward) to a perpetual fast"[narrated by Muslim, the compilers of the Sunan (except an-Nasaa'ee) and Ahmad]

Regarding fasting o-n the day of 'Aashoora, he used to observe fasting o-n that day more than any day; and when he arrived in Al-Madinah he found the Jews fasting o-n it and revering it and he said: "We have more right to Moses than you"

So he fasted it and ordered his Companions radiallahu 'anhum to do likewise [al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]. That was before the fasting of Ramadhaan became obligatory; then when Ramadhaan was made obligatory, he said: " Whoever wishes may fast it and whoever wishes may leave it" [al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]It was a part of his guidance to break his fast o-n the Day of 'Araafah. This is confirmed from him in the Saheehayn. It has also been narrated from him that he prohibited fasting o-n the Day of 'Araafah for those in 'Araafah. This was narrated by the compilers of the Sunan. And it has been authentically reported from him that he said: "Fasting it wipes out (the sins of) the previous year and the remaining year" This was mentioned by Muslim.It was not part of his guidance to fast continuosly, indeed he said: "Whoever fasted continuosly has neither fasted nor broken his fast" [narrated by an-Nasaa'ee, Ibn Maajah and Ahmad and authenticated by al-Haakim and Ibn Khuzaymah]

He would visit his wives and say:"Do you have anything (to eat)?" If they said "No", he would say:"Then I am fasting" [ narrated by Muslim o-n the authority of 'Aaishaah radiallahu 'anha]Sometimes he would intend to

perform a voluntary fast, then he would break it. As for the hadeeth of 'Aaishaah radiallaahu 'anha in which it is stated that he (**Õáì Çáåå Úáíå æÓáã**) said to her and Hafsaah radiallaahu 'anhumaa:" Make up for it by fasting another day in its place" [ narrated by at-Tirmidhee and Ahmad]

It is a hadeeth with some defect in it (according to Shu'aib and 'Abdul Waadir al-Arna'ut, it was also narrated by at-Tahawee and Ibn Hibaan with an authentic chain of narrators). If he visited some people while he was fasting, he would complete his fast as he did when he visisted Umm Sulaym [ al-Bukhaaree and Ahmad] but he considered Umm Sulaym as his family.

And it is authentically reported from him that he said: "If any of you is invited to eat when he is fasting, he should say: "I am fasting" [Muslim, Aboo Dawood, Ibn Maajah, Ahmad and Ad-Darami]

And it was a part of his guidance that he disliked singling out Friday for fasting. It is reported o-n the authority of Jaabir ibn 'Abdillah radiallaahu 'anhu that the Prophet
(**Õáì Çáåå Úáíå æÓáã**) said: "Do not fast o-n Friday unless you fast the day before it or the day after it as well" [ al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]. [Soorah al-Baqaarah, 2:183]

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